ART. XXII.—*The Utricular Glands of the Uterus, and the Glandular Organ of New Formation which is developed during Pregnancy in the Uterus of the Mammalia, including the Human Species, etc.* By Prof. G. B. ERCOLANI. *Translated by* HENRY O. MARCY, A.M., M.D. 8vo. pp. 305. With an *Atlas.* Boston: Houghton, Osgood & Co., 1880.

SUCH is the abbreviation of the title of a remarkable volume on the placenta. Why the book should not have been so named is a question that Prof. Ercolani has not thought worth while to mention. We may suggest a reason: the reader must become acquainted with the author's views at the onset. If the word placenta had been retained in the title the reader might have had lingering impressions of the views of William Hunter, Sharpey, and Bischoff. Prof. Ercolani boldly announces that his views are radically distinct therefrom, and emblazons the outlines of his theorem on the outside as well as the inside of his thesis.

To speak in extenso: Ercolani holds that the nutrition of the fœtus takes place in the uterus by means of a fluid secreted by a glandular organ of new formation. The placenta results from a conjunction of two portions entirely distinct in their anatomical structure and in their function; the fœtal portion, vascular, absorbent, and the maternal portion, glandular and excretory; moreover, that the glandular organ of the uterus wholly departs from the ordinary and known laws which regulate the formation of glands in the animal organism.

The book itself is the reprint of Prof. Ercolani's monographs which have appeared from time to time in the translation of the Academy of Science of Bologna. To these monographs is appended a series of short articles written for a French translation; and to these again a yet more recent publication by Ercolani, on the anatomical type of the placenta in mammals and the human species. The volume is like a series of concretions each fixed to the other, and arranged chronologically. The latest essay—since it expresses Ercolani's latest opinions—is of particular value. After the reader has become acquainted with the general outline of the subject we would suggest that he read the volume as a Hebrew manuscript from right to left, at least so far as the subjects are concerned. When he has mastered the exposition of the subject in the *last* essay he may read the preceding ones.

It would be a curious and instructive study to follow our author through his discriminating and never ungenerous comments upon the labours of the writers preceding him. But for this by no means least valuable portion of the volume, we must refer the reader to the text itself. It is a pleasant comment to make upon the spirit in which anatomists have laboured at the difficult subject of the structure of the placenta that nowhere in the book does an acrimonious expression occur. On the contrary, such phrases as the following are not infrequent: "fortunately at this period the distinguished anatomist, Professor William Turner, of Edinburgh, devoted himself with a rare steadiness of purpose to this kind of investigation, and had the happy opportunity of bestowing his learned and conscientious researches upon no small number of animals, either rare in themselves or difficult to obtain in a state of pregnancy." It must be remembered that Turner and Ercolani had come at one time in their studies to somewhat different conclusions. Again, Prof. Ercolani says of Bischoff, whose views respecting the maternal and the placental conjunction he had vigorously combated, "With a generosity rather unique than rare, valuable material for study was placed at my disposal by the distinguished professors—Bischoff and Milne Edwards."

The text is handsomely and abundantly illustrated by means of an atlas of ten quarto plates, engraved by Bettini, and reproduced by the heliotype process.

Dr. Marcy has placed the profession under obligation for the admirable manner in which he has accomplished his task. It has been very evidently a labor of love. He well writes, "By these researches is opened an almost unexplored field in the pathology of gestation, and this, too, is essentially the medical and more practical view of the subject. In the abnormal development of the placenta, and in the modifications of the nutrition of the fœtus will be found causes hitherto unknown of embryonic disease and arrest of intra-uterine life." This is the use which the profession will make of this addition to its literature. Let us glance once more at Prof. Ercolani's text for the spirit which actuated him in securing this contribution so fertile in its suggestion of "diseased action." A spirit we fear that is but little acknowledged in this age of *practical* medicine. Let the student who thinks that everything that is not practical is not worth knowing ponder over these words, coming as they do from one who has solved the problem of the structure of the placenta.

> "With reverence," says our author, "do I recall the honoured memory of Filippo Ingrassia, who, in the classic land which was the cradle of the revival of letters, eulogized at the close of the sixteenth century the fruitful union of human and veterinary medical science in his famous oration, published in 1568, entitled 'Quod Medicina Veterinaria formaliter una eademque sit, cum Nobiliore Hominis Medicina.' At a period so remote from our own, and when veterinarians were only poor farriers, holding a very humble position compared with those skilled in human surgery, this was the happy intuition of a noble mind, which boldly outrun the times, sowing the seed of that entire revolution which after three centuries comparative and experimental pathology have introduced into all medical instruction. . . . Comparative pathology will make its way among those who cultivate medical science throughout the civilized world. . . . If I shall be successful [in elucidating the structure of the placenta] the merit will not belong to me, but to the university in which I was educated in medical knowledge, where my illustrious master learnedly explained the pregnant teaching left us by Ingrassia, and to my having pursued in the study of the human placenta the method adopted by Fabricius, of Acquapendente, three centuries ago."

H. A.

ART. XXIII.—*A Text-book of the Physiological Chemistry of the Animal Body, Including an Account of the Chemical Changes occurring in Disease.* By ARTHUR GAMGEE, M.D., F.R.S., Professor in Victoria University, Manchester; Brackenbury Professor of Physiology in Owen's Coll. Vol. 1. 8vo. pp. xix., 485. London; Macmillan &. Co., 1880.

IN taking up a work like the present one, replete with all the attractions of the latest scientific research in its own peculiar field, the reader who can look back over a quarter of a century's experience, cannot fail to be reminded of the astonishing progress that has been made in the department of Physiological Chemistry. Indeed it may be affirmed that chem-